



Community or Faith-Based Campaign

Q & A - Strengthening Parents, Caregivers and Children

What can you do to enhance existing or establish new programming to support families during CAP Month and beyond?

- Host either no-touch or COVID-19 safe in-person resource drives to collect and/or distribute: diapers, food, backpacks, suitcases, sleep sacks and hygiene kits, etc.
- Request "wish lists" from local organizations and charities.
- Create a tutoring, mentoring or support group program.
- Create a pinwheel display.
- Launch emergency relief services.
- Support community safe housing efforts.

What can you do to provide parents information and resources regarding basic family needs to those who may be overwhelmed and struggling to provide proper care?

- Identify/share emergency childcare resources. The most common referral to CPS is a child being left alone.
- Host or support a Family Activity Center to include activities such as play groups, financial education opportunities, and more.
- Join with other community groups or congregations to increase the availability of resources, programming, and services for those in need.
- Provide mentors to parents of young children. For example, having someone to call when a baby won't stop crying may be an important step in prevention of maltreatment.
- Create parent networks or family clusters.
- Facilitate parents' interactions with each other and, their engagement and leadership in the community.
- Encourage young adults to assume important roles in service to the congregation and the community.
- Connect with your local Children's Trust Fund local council (child abuse and neglect prevention council) organization to consider other strategies to pursue for child protection and family support.

In-Faith Observances

In-faith observances can be tailored to fit a particular congregation's interests, needs, and resources. Some of these ideas may be useful to your church, synagogue, temple, mosque, or other house of worship in building or strengthening a community of faith in which children & families know that help is available when they need it.

Have Special Observances in a Worship Service

- Build an entire worship service around themes of building community, supporting families, and caring for children.
- Engage youth leadership (including children's programming leadership) to enable youth participation in the planning and implementation of the worship service.
- In adult classes, discuss the myths and facts about keeping children safe (e.g., you might invite a Children's Trust Fund of Michigan Local Council staff member or volunteer to lead the discussion).
- Ask members of the congregation to contribute to replenish any needed supplies of a community organization serving children and families.
- During the worship service, host a brief presentation about CAP Month, the reasons for it, and the possible role of the faith-based community.
- Honor members who are leaders in advocating for families in the congregation and the community.
- Pledge to support and connect with families of young children.



- Promote and participate in CTF's *Wear Blue Day* (clothing and/or wear pinwheel pins) campaign during CAP Month in support of the national Pinwheels for Prevention campaign. Pinwheel pin information can be found at www.michigan.gov/ctf.
- Share posts in the bulletin or newsletter that explain and describe opportunities for volunteer service that supports families through the faith organization itself or the local child abuse and neglect council.
- Explore if there is an interfaith or interdenominational council in your community and work with that council to protect children in your community.
- Incorporate Marian Wright Edelman's "[Prayer for Children](#)" into your faith observance.
- Use pinwheel imagery for your faith service and/or for the entire month of April.
- Reach out to your local child abuse and neglect prevention council to schedule a (virtual and/or socially distanced) presentation, distribute parenting resources and find out ways in which you can collaborate with other like-minded community organizations.

(For additional ideas contact the MI Children's Trust Fund, www.michigan.gov/ctf or Insert Local Council Name and contact information in this space).

Examples of In-Faith Observances

Children's Defense Fund Children's Sabbath Campaign

[This website](#) contains multi-faith resources and information about the National Observance of Children's Sabbaths Celebration (Children's Defense Fund). Although there is an event which takes place traditionally in October, Children's Sabbaths may be celebrated throughout the year, including during CAP Month (April).

Blue Sunday

[Blue Sunday](#) is a national Christian child abuse prevention initiative whose mission is to inspire others to create their own child abuse prevention efforts. If everyone did a little, we would see BIG results for children. [National Blue Sunday is April 24, 2022](#). Encourage local faith communities to join other faith communities across the nation as they take the time in their morning service to pray for the victims of child abuse.

Sample Letter*

Dear Faith Community Leader,

Child abuse is a major problem in our state. In 2019 nearly 38,000 children were abused or neglected in Michigan. Across Michigan efforts are being made to raise awareness about the impact of child abuse and neglect. We encourage faith communities to designate one Sabbath service in April to child abuse and neglect prevention.

Join faith communities across the nation as they participate in campaigns such as the [Children's Defense Fund - Children's Sabbath Campaign](#) or [Blue Sunday](#). Your organization can take the lead in making a difference in supporting families and protecting children.

On behalf of Michigan's children and families, we thank you for your time and consideration. Someone from our organization will be contacting you shortly to follow-up on how you might be involved in Child Abuse Prevention Month efforts.

**Note: This is a letter for your local council to use when reaching out to faith communities. Faith community Sabbaths occur on various weekdays depending upon each particular faith, e.g. Muslims on Fridays, Jews on Saturdays, many Christian denominations on Sunday etc. Please modify this letter accordingly*